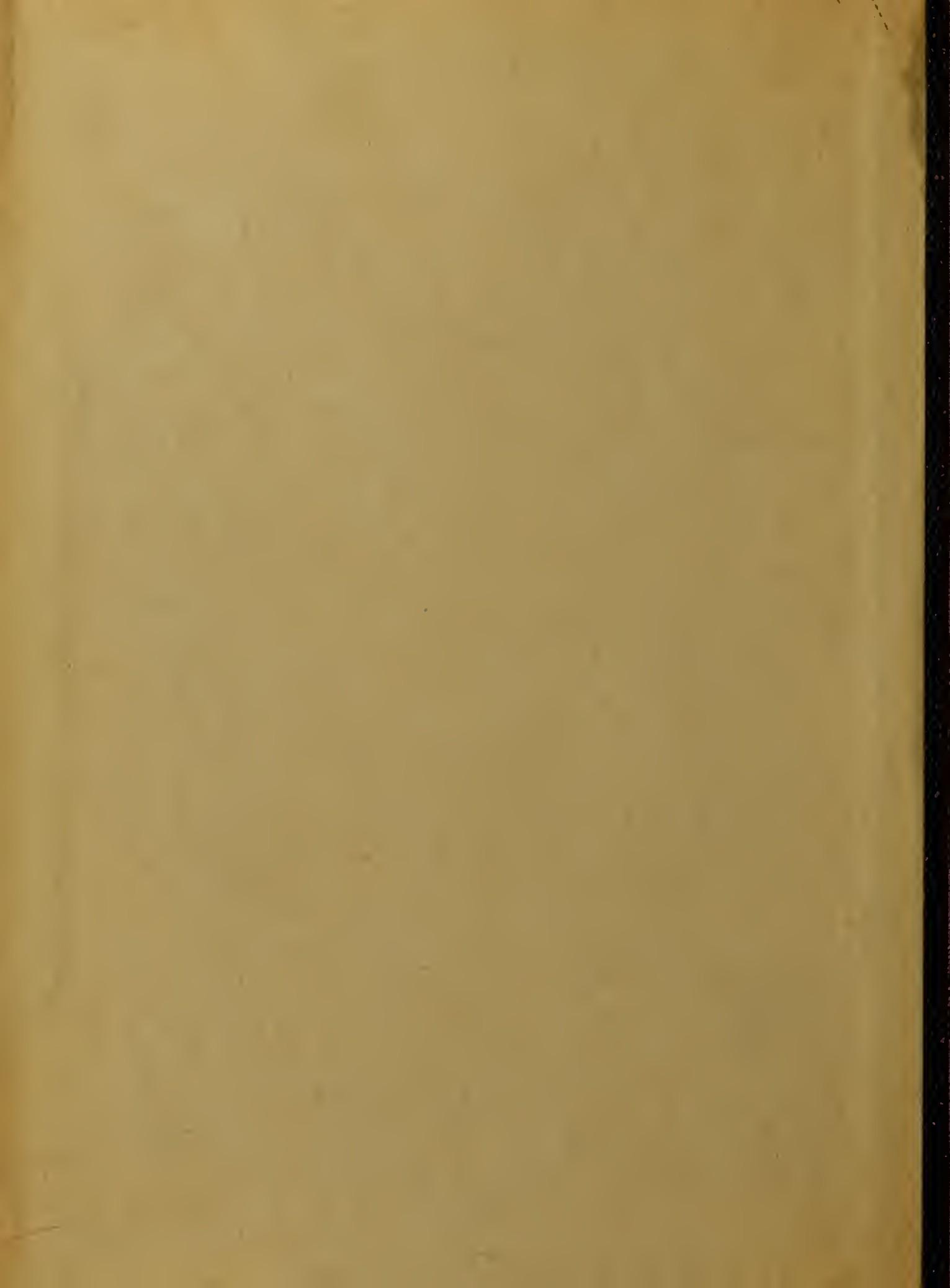


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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

THESIS

GERARD DE NERVAL

HIS LIFE AND WORK

BY

JOSEPHINE AGNES KEANY

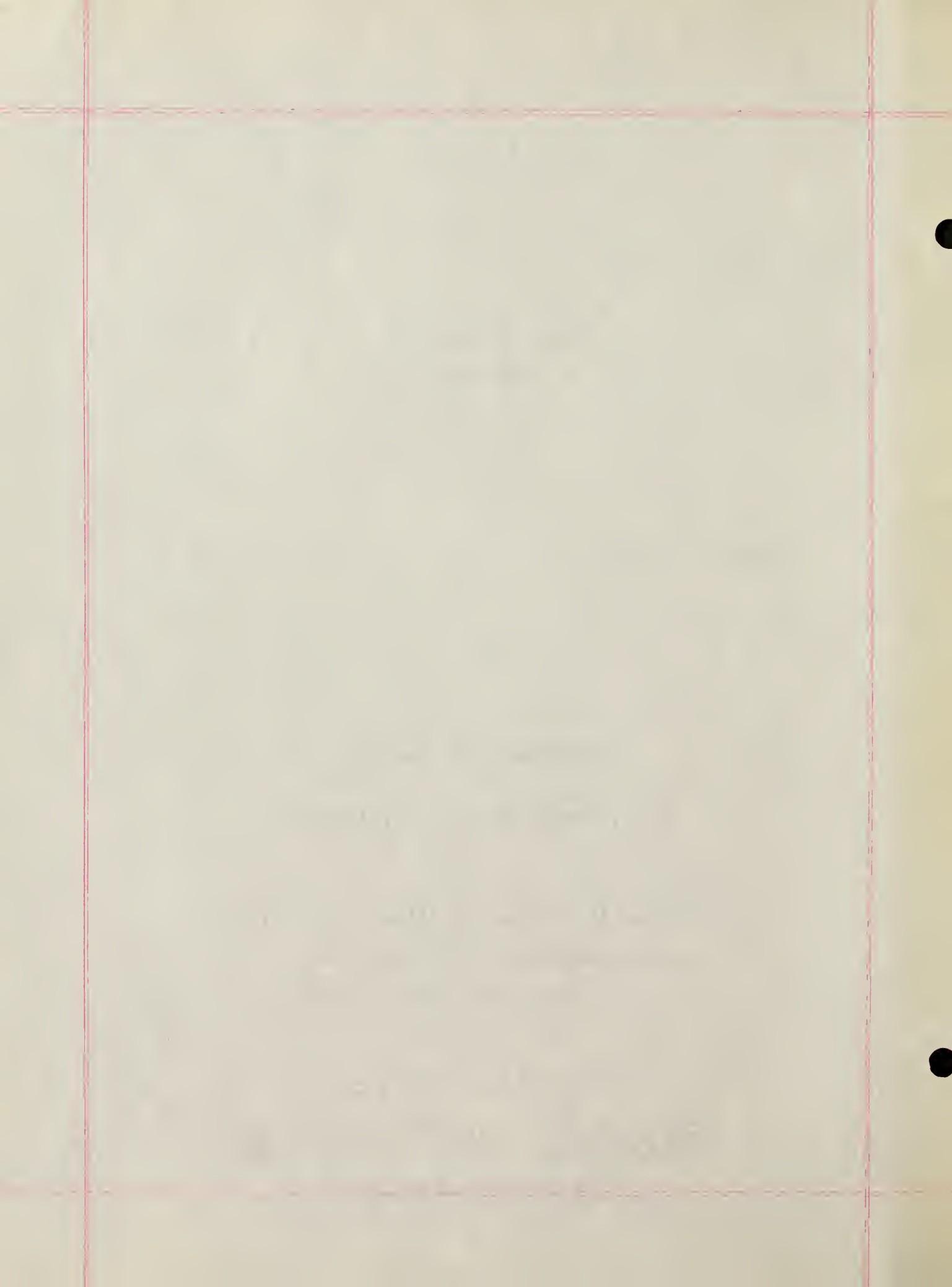
(A.B., BOSTON UNIVERSITY, 1920)

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

1938



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GÉRARD DE NERVAL

His Life and Work

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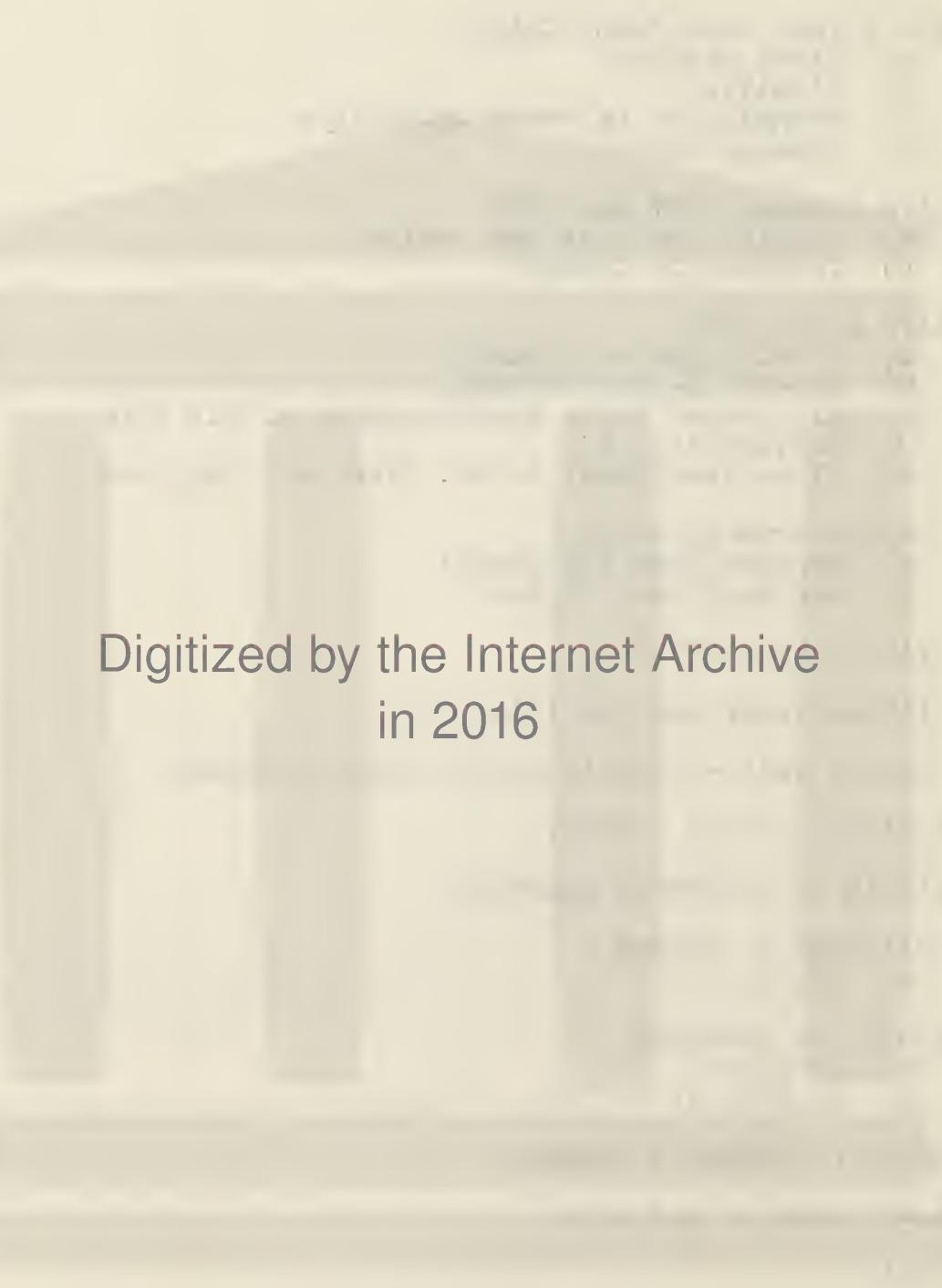
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INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I have endeavored to bring out the high-lights of the life of Gérard de Nerval which had a direct influence on his writings. I have tried to show what place he held among the Romantic writers of his day and what influence he had on the literary movements which followed, particularly Symbolism.

I have tried to show to what fantastic extremes his illness led him, resulting in literary achievements which are now being recognized.

The author has attempted to make a brief and
succinct history of the development of the
modern school system in the United States. He
has tried to emphasize the growth of the modern
school system in the United States from its
beginnings in New England in the early 1800's
to its present status in the 1930's. He has
attempted to show the influence of the various
factors which have contributed to the growth
of the modern school system in the United States.
He has also attempted to show the influence
of the various factors which have contributed to
the growth of the modern school system in the
United States.

GERARD DE NERVAL

His Life and Work

Gérard Labrunie, called Gérard de Nerval, is one of the minor Romantic writers who, until recently, has been neglected by critics and by historians or commentators of the early nineteenth century. His influence on other writers and on literary movements subsequent to 1850 is at last being recognized. The story of his life is fascinating and shows how productive he was in spite of, or perhaps because of, his ill health.

Gérard de Labrunie was born in Paris in 1808. His father, a native of the Midi, was a doctor doing health service in the army, and was waiting from day to day for orders to depart. His mother, who originally came from the north, always went along with her husband, so when orders came in December of that year, they departed, leaving the child in the charge of a nurse. She took him to Loisy, a barren country near what was called le Désert and where there were only twenty thatched roofed cottages. It was not at all like the neighboring towns of Senlis or Chantilly where there were woods and ponds and ruins of abbeys like Chaalis and Châteaux of Louis XIII and Henry IV.

WILHELM
MÜLLER

unterrichten, und die Schule ist eine der ersten, welche die
neuen Methoden des Unterrichts angewandt hat. Hier ist ein Beispiel:
Vor einigen Jahren hat Müller einen Klassenzimmer-
aufbau geschaffen, der nach dem Prinzip einer
großen Bibliothek aufgebaut ist. In der Mitte befindet
sich ein großer Tisch, auf dem eine Reihe von Büchern
liegen. Auf diesen Büchern sind verschiedene
Kinderbücher aufgestellt, so daß jedes Kind
einen kleinen Platz für sich findet. Die Kinder
sind in Gruppen von vier bis fünf Kindern
angeordnet, so daß sie sich leicht unterhalten
können. Der Lehrer steht in der Mitte des Raumes
und kann so leicht alle Kinder beobachten.
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When Gérard was about three years old word was received that his mother had died in Silesia and his father was reported to have disappeared. His grandparents, who kept a grocery store in Paris, sent the child to Mortefontaine to the home of his greatuncle, Antoine Boucher. Gérard enjoyed life here because he loved to take walks to Ermenonville; he loved the expanse of green lawns; the ponds, the understanding that existed between man and nature. He loved the religious festivals and the contests in archery. He used to follow men who carried bows and arrows; he loved to hear the horn and drum resound through the woods. He mingled with the youths who came in from Senlis and Chantilly and Compiègne; he danced the rondes with the country girls evenings and Sundays. Everyone petted the little boy whom they thought an orphan. He was perfectly happy here. An aunt explained to him the simple truths and practices of Christianity, hoping to interest him in a religious life, with no success. The village church with its little cemetery close by, the ringing of church bells, the naive chants and the stained glass windows would have been enough for an imagination as keen as Gérard's. But unfortunately this religious influence was combated by a mass of books that he found in an attic where his uncle had relegated them years before. The books

and the first family went into the house
and the second followed, holding up their hands
and saying "We have come to see you".
The old man said "I am not well enough to
see you now, but I will speak to you later".
The old man was very ill and died shortly
afterwards. The old man's wife had been
very ill for some time and she died shortly
after her husband. The old man's son and
daughter-in-law were very kind to them
and took care of them until they died.
The old man's son and daughter-in-law
had a son and a daughter. The son
was a good boy and the daughter
was a good girl. They were very kind
to their parents and took care of them
until they died. The old man's son
and daughter-in-law had a son and a
daughter. The son was a good boy and
the daughter was a good girl. They
were very kind to their parents and
took care of them until they died.

were about occultism and mysticism. He was puzzled by their mystery and depth, and unconsciously, he contracted at this early age a real mental malady. Also at this time and in this isolated bit of France, he heard stories of magic and mysticism and forbidden dreams. All of which must have slipped into the chats that the little boy had with his grand-uncle, and must have influenced his mind.

One evening when Gérard was playing before the open door of his home, three officers appeared. One of them seized the boy and embraced him effusively. It was his father, who had not died as had been reported, but had been wounded and imprisoned. Dr. Labrunie brought his son, who was only six years old, back to Paris to teach him what he called his "devoirs." A terrible word to the child who had grown up in complete freedom and liberty. He was now to be put in the school of reality.

The doctor's discipline was military. The boy thereafter knew no petting, coddling nor spoiling. He had to get up very early - late rising in the morning was disobedience and Gérard did not dream of disobeying. He respected his father too much. Each morning a soldier in his father's regiment awakened him before dawn and took him to walk on the neighboring hills of Paris, making him eat breakfast of bread

and cream on the farms and dairies. The old soldier must have made the child walk fast, being accustomed to military marching. What stories he must have told little Gérard, and how eagerly the boy must have listened! On these walks he heard descriptions of Russia and Germany, of the Rhine and Danube, the Polish frontier, the Spree and the Baltic. On these walks he saw not only Paris, but a corner of Europe which he was to cherish later. His head was full of glorious itineraries. On returning home he would find the doctor singing the words of an Italian song that his wife had loved, accompanying himself on a guitar. Gérard had no memory whatsoever of his mother. He had not seen her again after she had left to go with his father, and he was only a few months old at the time. But letters that he had received from her mentioning names of foreign places gave him a desire for travel.

Gérard's early education was in the hands of his father who carefully taught him not only Latin and Greek, but also German and Italian and the rudiments of Arabic and Persian, hoping to get him into diplomatic service. Even in his early days he was an avid reader of the mystics and the Utopians, which gave that first fantastic turn to his brain that later ended in complete madness.

The boy's development was normal at first. When

it was time to go to a lycée, the nearest one was chosen, the Collège Charlemagne, where he won every prize. He was a docile pupil and was held up as an example to his classmates. While here, he wrote verses and then poems. It was at this time that Béranger and Casimir Delavigne were his favorites and the youthful poet paid tribute to them by imitating them. He had his poetry published, which was rather remarkable for a child of sixteen. He also composed some odes in praise of Napoleon that won high approval from his professors, and his comrades began to look up to this phenomenon. In 1826 these odes were published as "Elégies Nationales." It was at the Collège Charlemagne that he first met Théophile Gautier who was to become his best friend, and his most important associate among contemporary men of letters.

Gérard was not a boarder at the school and during the vacations he visited his cousins in Mortefontaine in Valois. In spite of these vacations which were spent rather in dreaming and idling than in disciplinary work, Gérard Labrunie revealed himself as an ardent devotee of letters. In his trips to Valois, he began to collect songs and stories, ballads and airs that he had heard in his childhood at his uncle's house and which he had had repeated by his father's servant, the old soldier who had accompanied him on

these walks. Gérard returned to Paris with these fine collections and began to think about French poetry and its source. He wrote for the Académie contest of 1826 "Un Discours sur l'histoire de la langue et de la littérature franaises au temps de la Renaissance." In this discourse he analyzes and criticises du Bellay's famous "Défense et illustration de la langue française." Then he passed to Ronsard and praised his energetic and brilliant versification. Gérard failed to win a prize in this contest and in 1826 he wrote a farce in verse, "L'Académie ou les Membres Introuvables." When he brought the manuscript to Touquet, the editor, he said to Gérard, "Jeune homme, vous irez loin." In 1828 he wrote an ode to Béranger whom he loved and admired.

In the late twenties, when Gérard was just entering the field of letters, the literature of foreign countries was beginning to be studied in France. Shakespeare, Richardson, Ossian, Byron, Scott, Schiller, Goethe were all well known names at any rate to the well-read Frenchmen. Mme. de Staël was especially responsible for a knowledge of German literature. Gérard, falling in line with this trend to explore the beauties in other literatures, translated "Faust," an exploit which earned a very high compliment from the great

Goethe himself and gave to the young writer a literary reputation which he never lost. When the work appeared, Goethe wrote "Je ne me suis jamais si bien compris qu'en vous lisant." Those soldiers who had followed Napoleon across Europe had brought back to their homes German words and expressions. Gérard's father had taught him German, so in translating "Faust" he was able to get at the meaning better than previous translators, and he rendered the original with great color and richness. Incidentally, this was the first work that he signed Gérard de Nerval, a name taken from property that had been in his family a long time.

Gérard's biographer, Aristide Marie, tells of an incident which shows clearly what Goethe thought of this translation of his "Faust." Eckermann, who was visiting Goethe, found him perusing a book with signs of keenest approval.

"Que lisez-vous là, Maitre," demanda Eckermann.

"Une traduction de mon "Faust" en langue française."

"Ah! oui," dit Eckermann, légèrement dédaigneux.

"J'ai entendu parler de cela; c'est un jeune homme de dix-huit ans. Cela doit sentir le collège."

"Dix-huit ans!" exclama Goethe, "Mais alors, retenez bien ceci: cette traduction est un véritable prodige

de style. Son auteur deviendra l'un des plus purs et des plus élégants écrivains de France." Et il ajouta, "Je n'aime plus le "Faust" en allemand, mais dans cette traduction, tout agit de nouveau avec fraîcheur et vivacité. Il me passe par la tête des idées d'orgueil quand je pense que mon livre se fait valoir dans la langue de Bossuet, de Corneille et de Racine. Je vous le répète, ce jeune homme ira loin." (1)

His frequent trips to Germany made him a sort of literary ambassador to that country and he made it better known to his countrymen by his translations of the poetry of Bürger and Heine who up to this time were practically unknown to the French. He translated beautiful ballads of Schiller and Klopstock. His study of Goethe must have been in his mind when he wrote a drama in verse, "Nicolas Flamel," in which there are reminiscences of "Faust." Satan appears to Nicolas in the Tour-Saint Jacques just as Mephistopheles appeared to Faust in his study at Leipzig.

But the influence of life in Germany was too much for him. Preoccupations with the invisible and supernatural were excluding the monotonous routine of life, and with these influences gradually obsessing him, he was rapidly developing the original and erratic character of his later years.

(1) Aristide Marie: "Gérard de Nerval," p. 33

As I have said, Dr. Labrunie had taught his son German hoping to get him into the diplomatic service. But by a strange twist of fate, this same language was going to bring Gérard nearer to the obscure dream of the German Romantics and make germinate the seeds of that mysticism which had begun to develop in him from his first readings. His adoption of a literary career was a great disappointment to his father, who thought a poet or writer was a weakling and a good-for-nothing. A man, accustomed to such matter of fact deeds as amputating limbs on a battlefield, could have no sympathy for a man of letters. It is probable that this parental coldness first caused him to find a congenial asylum in the Bohemia of which he was never a typical inhabitant.

In 1834 he left his father's home and lived in garrets, with an income of only four hundred francs, an inheritance from his mother, and one dinner a week with his father. A place was always set for Gérard for dinner on Thursdays and if he did not appear, because of his travels or because of other considerations, the doctor did not remove the cover but sat opposite the unoccupied place. He was the classic father of a poet: prudent, cautious and always giving good advice. About this time Gérard's grandfather

died, leaving him thirty thousand francs. With great haste and impatience, and not waiting for the estate to be liquidated, he borrowed money and went off on a long trip, economizing by using rickety coaches, cheap boats and by walking.

Gérard's success with "Faust" had brought him in touch with Victor Hugo and after the days of "Hernani," he held in the Cénacle if not the most influential, at least one of the most distinguished positions as a lieutenant of the demi-god of the Romantics, with notable achievements in the field of letters already to his credit. He threw in his lot with the Cénacle, but though he even wrote some revolutionary poems in 1830, for which he was imprisoned in the Sainte Pélagie, he was never quite at ease with all the members, particularly with Pétrus Borel. The flamboyant side of Romanticism, and its noisy gatherings had little appeal for him. Although most of the Romantics wore bright colored clothing and eccentric accoutrements, Gérard de Nerval confined himself to inconspicuous colors, usually wearing a pearl gray coat and hat, or a black frock-coat. He was an eccentric, and a solitary by nature, as his writings show. He was according to Gautier, a gentle and modest young man who blushed like a girl, with a pink and white complexion

and soft grey eyes. His fine light golden hair, his forehead beautifully shaped, shone like polished ivory. His customary black coat had enormous pockets, in which he buried a whole library of books picked up on the quais, five or six notebooks and a large collection of scraps of paper on which he wrote down the ideas which occurred to him on his long walks. He was a perfect peripatetic. As he once said, he would have liked to walk through life unrolling an endless scroll of paper on which he might write his reflections. He was called "le bon Gérard" because, as Gautier said, "Goodness radiated from him, and he was willing to go to the most distant part of Paris to do a favor for a friend, particularly if he was penniless, to help him get an article published or to interview an editor in his behalf." (1)

He lived at this time with Camille Rogier, the artist, in the rue des Beaux Arts but his friends could never be sure where to find him. For him no hour was sacred to rest. He wandered about Paris at all times of the day and night, dropping in on a friend for an hour or two, then darting off again, no one knew where, his thoughts in the clouds, and returning in the small hours, only to flit from his bed at dawn. Théo likened him to a swallow. (2) Of all the gay

(1) Théophile Gautier, "Histoire du Romantisme," p. 70

(2) Ibid. p. 71

companions of Bohemia, he was the best loved, for his child-like simplicity and his gentle manners won all hearts. He went through life to his terrible death with complete unworldliness, almost like a ghost, unconscious of the material side of existence, directing his feet only by the light of his spirit. Gautier, writing after Gérard's death, protested vehemently that his was no ordinary tragedy of neglected genius. (1) He had money enough, but money was nothing to him, so he spent it without a thought. His work was always accepted by editors; newspapers were glad to get any article by him, and his plays, though not successful, were actually produced. But success was the last of his preoccupations. He was a wanderer living in a world of his own fantasies. He wrote with various noms de plume, such as Fritz, Aloysius Block, Lord Pilgrim, changing only when the style of the work betrayed him to be the author.

At a meeting of the second Cénacle at an obscure cabaret kept by Graziano, a plain white-washed room with a sanded floor, a dresser covered with violently colored faience, and plain wooden benches, they were initiated by their host to the delights of spaghetti, stufato and other Italian dishes. Delicious meals these, and washed down with

(1) Théophile Gautier, "Histoire du Romantisme," p. 146

and the first time I have seen it. It is a very
handsome tree, and I hope to get some seeds
from it. The leaves are large and deeply lobed,
the flowers are white, and the fruit is a large
orange. The bark is smooth and grey.
The tree is about 10 feet tall and has a
diameter of about 12 inches. The leaves are
about 6 inches long and 3 inches wide. The
flowers are about 1 inch in diameter. The
fruit is about 2 inches in diameter and has a
thin skin. The tree is growing in a
small clearing in a forest. The soil is
very poor and rocky. The tree is
the only one of its kind in the
vicinity. I have never seen it before.
I am sending you a specimen of the
tree and some seeds. Please accept my
best regards.

wine of Argenteuil or Suresnes. Still they felt them to be a trifle wanting in Romantic glamor. It was all very well to be enjoying incomparable macaroni, but what made this banquet different from the prosaic meal of Joseph Prudhomme? Something was wanting, and a brilliant idea was struck upon that would give a charnel flavor to the wine - it should be drunk from a skull! Gérard immediately procured one from his father, the doctor, which was ingeniously mounted by Gautier who screwed to its side an old brass handle from a chest of drawers. It was a noble bowl and the pious company drank from it with bravado, trying to conceal their natural repugnance.

Apart from his eccentricities, Gérard de Nerval was a scholar and a gentleman whose attainments equalled those of Gautier himself, though he could not bring himself to exploit them. At that time when it was the aim of everyone to be as eccentric as possible, the eccentricities of Gérard's life and thought seemed on the whole less noticeable than those of really quite normal persons. There was no pose.

Gérard found a new home for the Bohemians, near the Place du Carrousel. In one of the old houses of the Impasse du Doyenne there was a set of rooms remarkable for its salon. It was a huge room, decorated in the old fashioned Pompadour

style with grooved paneling, pier glasses and a fantastically moulded ceiling. This decoration had chased away many tenants, until Gérard saw it and persuaded Rogier to transfer his household goods from the rue des Beaux Arts. Thus Bohemia entered on its ideal home. Gérard, with what was left of his patrimony, chose to spend it on his one hobby, the collection of pictures and furniture. Old works of art were not yet appreciated and in Paris there was a large quantity of precious old furniture, tapestries and fabrics brought there after the sacking of many ecclesiastical buildings under the Restoration. Gérard had acquired a wonderful canopied Renaissance bed, ornamented with salamanders, a Médicis console, a side-board decorated with nymphs, paintings, chairs, and so on. It was a magnificent studio, worthy of "la Bohème Galante." No bare attic on the sixth floor for this quartet, Rogier, Gautier, Houssaye and Nerval. Although a founder of the "Bohème Galante," Gérard felt no compunction in confining himself to the nest. He wandered ceaselessly, often only returning when the night sky grew pale, to leave again when it was fairly blue. He had a task and that task was connected with his great romance.

In the days of the Cénacle, Gérard had fallen desperately in love with Jenny Colon of the Opera Comique,

an actress and singer of not more than ordinary talent. It was a passion that went to the very roots of his being, an infatuation enriched by all his romantic mysticism. She was the goddess who ruled his dreams by night and day, and it was in anticipation of her that he had purchased his wonderful Renaissance bed with the salamanders and carved pillars. No room that he ever possessed was large enough to hold this bed, which was always lodged with friends, first in the Impasse, then in other parts of Paris. They respected his frenzy, for the bed never had an occupant and they kept it sacred until its deluded owner was obliged by straightened circumstances to part with it. Gérard's bed was the epitome of his life - a search for a phantom; but the real Jenny, though her vulgar heart was unmoved by a shy poet's awkward homage, was not unwilling to accept his services. Gérard seemed to have a definite feminine ideal, blond, white skin, Roman nose and a small mouth. Jenny Colon seemed to have been this type of which he had dreamed.

Gérard's affair with Jenny was quite unsuccessful. He saw her at the Opéra Comique and intended to speak to her but he lost his courage. At the end of the fourth act, he left, bought flowers and sent them to the actress with a tender card signed "L'Inconnu" and left for Germany. No one knows

anything of this trip but on his return two months later, there was a great change in him. Collaborating with Dumas, he wrote "Piquillo," filled with picaresque adventures and Spanish love. Monpon wrote the music and Jenny accepted the lead. Gérard had written scenes of very passionate love and finally spoke to her of his feelings, revealing himself for the first time as L'Inconnu. "Vous êtes bien fou, dit-elle, mais revenez me voir - je n'ai jamais pu trouver quelqu'un qui sût m'aimer." Then began a pleasant but tragic comedy. Little is known of it except from letters. These were never sent, they were written to be published. They show an effort in writing entirely lacking in spontaneity. They tell of passioned love and melancholy; they are full of hope, fear and resignation - all that Gérard might have actually said to his beloved. It did not matter that she belonged to others, she was the first woman he loved. He was timid with her, he could not express his love for her in spoken words, but he wrote passionately.

He wanted to help her attain her ambitions, to make her career easier, so with the money that remained of his inheritance, he founded "Le Monde Dramatique" which he devoted to her praise. But Jenny did not treat him seriously. She was not in love with him. She was having another affair

and the second and third digits are 1000. This is called the
fourth power of 10. In other words, 1000 is the same as 10 times
itself three times. It is also called a thousand.
Now let's look at some other powers of 10. If we multiply
10 by itself four times, we get 10,000. This is called the fifth
power of 10. It is also called a hundred thousand.
If we multiply 10 by itself five times, we get 100,000. This is called
the sixth power of 10. It is also called a million.
If we multiply 10 by itself six times, we get 1,000,000. This is called
the seventh power of 10. It is also called a billion.
If we multiply 10 by itself seven times, we get 10,000,000. This is called
the eighth power of 10. It is also called a ten billion.
If we multiply 10 by itself eight times, we get 100,000,000. This is called
the ninth power of 10. It is also called a one hundred billion.
If we multiply 10 by itself nine times, we get 1,000,000,000. This is called
the tenth power of 10. It is also called a one thousand billion.

So you see, you can multiply 10 by itself as many times as you want.
The more times you multiply it, the bigger the number gets.
And the bigger the number gets, the harder it is to write it down.
That's why we use scientific notation to write really big numbers.
It makes them easier to read and understand.

which she found difficult to break off. He was a platonic friend and was glad to be classified as such, being first on the list - and for it gave up his pride and pretensions of a lover. One wonders what charms Jenny had, what power she had over Gérard, who gave so much and got so little in return. When "Piquillo" which he had written with Dumas, turned out to be a success and he received money for it, he thought he had won a double victory. It is hard to believe that in a moment of exaltation he offered to marry her, because for her he was just one more Bohemian. Jenny broke off the affair cruelly, brutally, and married a flutist shortly after.

Between 1837 and 1839 Gérard stayed in Paris writing several plays, a number of articles and reviews. His way of life was always eccentric. Being a solitary by nature, he often spent his evenings alone, reading until the early hours of the morning. He would balance a brass candle stick with a lighted candle in it, on his forehead, to give himself light. Not infrequently he would fall asleep, the candle would fall, almost setting the place on fire.

Gérard's interest in dreams and in occultism was coming to occupy his mind more and more. He delved more deeply into the pseudo-science and beliefs of Mesmer and Swedenborg and Cagliastro, whom he had studied all his life.

They had been very much the vogue among the intellectual youths of his generation. "Memorabilia" of Swedenborg were always a constant subject of delight to him. He was especially interested in the transmigration of souls. From the spring of 1840 Gérard was no longer what he seemed to be on the surface. In the hidden recesses of his soul a change was taking place of which he alone knew the secret. He had the gift of being able to dream, not only at night, and he could revive his dreams completely from memory. They were all the sweeter because his diseased mind changed their cruelties into fortune, happiness, love. Among his manuscripts was found the sentence: "Le rêve est un habit, tissé par les fées, et d'une délicieuse odeur."

As time went by he acquired an avid taste for this life of delights. It became second nature not to live but to dream. He imagined the strange happiness of living in a world where it was always night. He tried to conjure up logical dreams, believed he could succeed in it by entertaining sane and pure ideas, in order not to offend the gods of sleep. This life of the spirit had begun immediately after his disappointment in love and fortune, starting with fits of insomnia. Then the beliefs of Swedenborg and other mystics added to his dreams, let loose a deluge of hallucinations. He thought it

the first time I have seen it. It is a very large tree, and has a very large trunk. The bark is smooth and grey, and the leaves are green and pointed. The flowers are white and fragrant. The fruit is round and yellow, and tastes very good. The tree is very tall and straight, and stands in the middle of a clearing. There are many other trees around it, but none are as tall or as straight. The ground is covered in grass and small plants. The sky is blue and clear. The sun is shining brightly. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

would be intoxicating to sacrifice everything in this world and purify his soul to conciliate the souls of those who had gone to a life beyond. He wanted to hear their warnings in dreams and nightmares, to participate in their happy visions, to plan an after life.

"I like to arrange my life as if it were a novel," wrote Gérard de Nerval, and it is sometimes difficult to disentangle the precise facts of an existence about which he was never quite sure where it began and where it ended, that "overflowing of dreams into real life." "I do not ask of God," he said, "that he should change anything in events themselves, but that he should change me in regard to things, so that I might have the power to create my own universe about me, to govern my dreams instead of enduring them." (1) This prayer was not granted in its entirety; and the tragedy of his life lay in the vain endeavor to hold back the irresistible empire of the unseen, which once summoned could not be controlled.

Gérard was naturally a victim of hallucinations. In 1840 while walking along the street one evening, he noticed the number on a house which equalled his age. On raising his head, he noticed a woman who closely resembled Jenny Colon. The thought struck him that it meant either his

(1) Arthur Symons, "The Symbolist Movement in Literature," p. 13

the same time, the author has added a new and original chapter on "The Art of the Novel" in which he has tried to analyze the nature of the novel and its relation to other forms of literature. This chapter is particularly interesting because it shows that the author has a deep understanding of the nature of the novel and its place in the literary world. He also discusses the relationship between the novel and other forms of literature, such as poetry and drama, and how they differ from each other. The author's analysis of the novel is based on his own experience as a writer and his knowledge of the history of literature. He also provides some useful tips for writers who want to write novels. The book is well-written and informative, and it is a valuable addition to any library. I highly recommend it to anyone who is interested in the art of the novel.

Overall, "The Art of the Novel" is a great book that provides a comprehensive overview of the art of the novel. It is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand the nature of the novel and its place in the literary world.

death or hers. Actually he felt it would be his own, and he went around saying good-bye to friends. Then he began to follow a star, singing and taking off his clothing, throwing it aside as he walked along. The police, on their night rounds, found him and took him to a maison de santé on the rue de Picpus, kept by Dr. Blanche. Here he spent a month. He thought he saw his double; his conscious self saw the other as a spectre. He was now insane completely. Insanity came just when the name of Gerard de Nerval was appearing on his work, "Amours de Vienne," published in the Revue de Paris. He went through the various stages of the demented, melancholy, depression, visions and finally fits of insanity. At one time he had to be put in a straight jacket.

At last he was released and when he came out, he resumed a life of vagabondage wilder than ever, with or without money, caring little, and ready to go to the ends of the earth on a whim and without a penny. He told his friends that he was cured, but the truth is that in his lucid moments, he was worried over his sickness. He kept to himself, not mixing with his friends. He was afraid of madness, he was ashamed to be unable to trust his reason, he was afraid of being suspected, he who no longer felt himself on an equality with other men. From now on he was never alone. His double,

his other self, was there, latent but always ready to awaken to carry on terrifying conversations with the one who was still among men. But each time that Gérard had to mix with men, he wore a mask-like smile and talked unnaturally and forced. After a year he conceived the plan of a "grande entreprise" which would give him, in the eyes of the world, a new being and which would make him forget his sickness. He would take a trip to distant countries. So he spent the winter preparing for a voyage to the oriental shores of the Mediterranean during which he would devote himself to study and writing.

Now, he underwent another trial. Jenny Colon died in all the glory of her beauty and talent, and her death filled Gérard with a great sadness which served as food to the illusions of his madness, because he was convinced that the woman he loved belonged to him more in death than in life. Now she was surely his. She was Aurélia, perhaps even Adrienne. She is all the women of his works. She never left him. She followed him in all his adventurous wanderings. He did nothing, saw nothing, that he did not recall to her. Around her crystallizes what one might call Gérard's philosophy, that is, memories of his youthful readings which go from Swedenborg to Mesmer, from occultism to mysticism, from

the beliefs of his Catholic childhood to the reflections which the two "Fausts" of Goethe suggested to him. All that went pell-mell with the regrets of his first loves and created that lyricism peculiar to Gérard.

As the year 1842 was closing, it promised for the New Year liberation from his hallucinations through travel. Money was found, thanks to the newspapers. Gérard already felt like a new man, he was going to throw off the weight of his most recent past. This respite from madness lasted for several years.

Travels to the Orient were very much in fashion in these days. Memories of Chateaubriand and Lamartine had made of them a sort of sacred pilgrimage. On January 1, 1843 Gérard de Nerval embarked with the eminent Egyptologist, M. de Fonfrède, whom he gives us the impression of having taken along to complete his explorer's material. Cairo was to him a paradise. All was shadow and mirage - the crowd in the street looked like a masked ball; the cafés at night were like fairyland; the procession of a wedding night made Gérard dream of this bride, a veiled queen, whose husband did not yet know if he would find on unveiling her, beauty or ugliness. He wandered about in Cairo, observing, talking with women, completely happy. He considered M. de Fronfrède a jailer and

loved to slip out alone and see life as it was lived. Of course he had conceived here a world of his own and had tried to live it before writing it. On returning to Paris he labored more than two years on the work in which he wanted to show evidence of his sanity and the certitude of his literary future. "Le Voyage en Orient," full of poetry, is one of the important works of the nineteenth century. The legends of the Orient could not help but have a great influence on his imagination, already excited by the reading of Goethe's "Divan Oriental."

Returning to Paris after having visited the Orient, he wrote charming and remarkably sane articles and books. He was now penniless, and his spirit was in the clouds. He became a dramatic critic, but continued to wander around Paris in a perpetual dream, carrying with him a complete supply of writing paraphernalia, paper, pens, small bottle of ink, a library in the vast pockets of his black redingote. Thus fortified, he would go to the office of "L'Artiste," which Arsène Houssaye kept open for his friends. Here Gérard would usually find Gautier, Pétrus Borel or Baudelaire. He fled from here when the company became too numerous and would go to the Café d'Orsay, only to leave there when friends arrived. Meanwhile he was writing "Le Voyage en Orient" which La Revue

des Deux Mondes was beginning to publish in May, 1846. He was also writing unsuccessful plays.

In 1850 he again went completely mad and was sent once more to Dr. Blanche's Maison de Santé. This stay was longer than the previous one but when he seemed to be reasonable, his friends were allowed to take him out for the day occasionally. Apparently cured, he came out and took a few trips, to Belgium, Holland and Germany. He often visited Heinrich Heine who was then stricken with paralysis. The generous Gérard wanted to procure for him a little glory before he died, so he translated some of his poems for the Revue des Deux Mondes. These two were kindred spirits and endured poverty and misery with the same cheerfulness. From now on Gérard's faculties remained almost permanently clouded. He was perfectly conscious of this but bore his affliction cheerfully. His money was all gone and the flashes of sanity were too rare to be able to earn much. He was homeless but not friendless. He never appealed to his friends in vain. He came for crumbs like a bird in winter but like a bird, he would not stay.

Paul de Saint-Victor wrote after Gérard's death, "In vain his friends tried to follow him with their eyes and hearts; he was lost to sight for weeks, months, years. Then

and the first time I have seen it. It is a very
large and strong tree, and its trunk is
about 12 inches in diameter. The bark is
smooth and greyish-white, with some
vertical markings. The leaves are
elliptical and pointed, with serrated edges.
The flowers are small and yellow,
and the fruit is a small, round, red
berry. The tree is found in the
mountains of the Andes, particularly
in the regions of Ecuador and Peru.
It is used by the local people for
making dyes and medicines, and
is also valued for its timber.
The wood is hard and durable,
and is used for making furniture
and other household items. It is
also used for making charcoal
and for fuel. The tree is
considered to be a valuable
resource for the local communities
and is protected by law.

one fine day he would be found by chance, in a foreign city, a provincial town, or more often still in the country thinking aloud, dreaming with eyes open, his attention fixed on the fall of a leaf, the flight of an insect, the form of a cloud. Never did man see a gentler madness, a tenderer folly, a more inoffensive and more friendly eccentricity. If he awoke from his slumber, it was to recognize his friends, to love them and serve them, to double the warmth of his devotion and welcome, as if he wished to make up to them for his long absence by an extra amount of tenderness."

He had great solicitude for small animals. He even claimed to have made one from the fuzz taken from the depths of his pocket! It was during a short period of mild insanity that he was seen leading a lobster on a leash through the Palais-Royal. He explained that it was not more ridiculous to lead a lobster than a dog, a cat, a gazelle or a young lion. He liked lobsters because they know the secrets of the sea and they do not bark like dogs.

He went back to the scenes of his childhood; at Senlis he heard children sing the rondes and all the old songs that he heard sung as a child. Memories surged over him, and he became homesick. His thoughts were a world of echoes. Just when he thought that travel had healed his sick-

and the first time I have seen it. It is a very
handsome specimen and I am sure it will bring
a good price. I have just now got a
copy of the "Journal of the Royal Microscopical
Society" for 1875 and in it is a paper by
Dr. J. C. Gray on the "Microscopic
Observations on the Structure of the Human
Heart". In this paper he describes a
peculiar structure which he calls the "endo-
cardial pecten" and which he says
is a very common structure in the heart
of the human embryo. He also
describes a similar structure in the heart
of the frog. This structure is
very interesting and I think it
will be of great interest to you.
I have also just now got a copy
of the "Journal of the Royal Microscopical
Society" for 1876 and in it is a paper by
Dr. J. C. Gray on the "Microscopic
Observations on the Structure of the Human
Heart". In this paper he describes a
peculiar structure which he calls the "endo-
cardial pecten" and which he says
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of the frog. This structure is
very interesting and I think it
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ness, his memories evoked faces which became dreams, dreams which oppressed him. He was too much alone with them, they possessed him.

Back in Paris he began working again and wrote the tragedy "Angélique." He also translated "Misanthrope et Repentir" of Kotzebue, and continued to write for the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Curiously enough, he seemed to be inspired, really wise, passionate, collected, and master of himself only when insane - a remarkable pathological phenomenon.

During the day Gérard could sleep, but night awakened him, and that restlessness which the night draws out in those who seem to be under an occult lunar influence, set his feet wandering. The sun never appeared in his dreams, but with the approach of night he, like everyone, was ready to believe in the mystery lurking behind the world. His delirious dreams reproached him for his errors, and little by little separated him from his friends and relatives, kept him discouraged. He was sent away to a hospital yet again for a few months and came out apparently cured, but he still had dreams. The despair of not having lived well obsessed him. In this state of mind "Sylvie" was written and appeared in August 1853. It is a delightful idyll, a collection of the memories of his childhood, gathered from Ermenonville, pure

and fresh, and makes one think of "Paul et Virginie." It is one of his three great achievements.

Soon after the publication of this work, insomnia drove him into the streets several nights in succession. He visited his friends but became unbearable to them. He ridiculed Dumas' hair, much to his displeasure. In the absence of Buloz's cook, he turned on all the faucets in the kitchen. Many other eccentricities and violences caused him to be taken again to Dr. Blanche's hospital. He was now worried for fear of losing his creative powers, and he had no money to pay the doctor. He wanted to fix in his mind all the impressions that his illness left him, feeling that he was a useful study for observation and science, so he wrote "Aurélia." "Le Rêve et la Vie," the last fragments of which were found in his pockets after his suicide, scrawled on bits of paper, is a narrative of a madman's visions by the madman himself, yet showing, as Gautier says, "cold reason seated by the bedside of hot fever, hallucination analysing itself by supreme philosophic effort." (1)

Gérard's madness was essentially due to the weakness, not to the excess, of his visionary quality, and to his lack of spiritual discipline. He was an unsystematic mystic.

(1) Théophile Gautier, "Portraits et Souvenirs Littéraires"
p. 65

Any reasoned scheme of things, the Catholic Church for example, would have been a safety valve for him. Wavering amidst intuitions, pseudo-mysticism, half-truths, shadows of falsehoods, he was blown hither and thither by conflicting winds, a prey to the indefinite.

In August of 1854 he was again sent to the Maison of Dr. Blanche and had to be put in a straight jacket. He escaped and spent his time with his friends and taking short trips. In January 1855 he appeared at Théophile Gautier's apartment, carrying a white girdle in his pocket. He claimed it belonged to Madame de Maintenon and had been worn by her at the performance of "Esther" at St. Cyr. He was terribly depressed and confessed to Théo that he could not work any more. The next few days and nights were spent flitting about Les Halles, talking with strangers. For days he had fled those he had loved most, those who in all his difficult times had helped him most; Gautier, Houssaye, Belle, Beauvoir. He would not tell them his troubles, would not ask them for anything. On January 24th he was arrested as a vagabond. He was used to these little occurrences but he complained of the difficulty of writing. "I set off after an idea," he said, "and lose myself. I am hours in finding my way back. Do you know I can scarcely write twenty lines a day, the darkness comes

about me so close!" (1)

The night of January 26th, with the temperature eighteen degrees below, he was wandering in Les Halles in and out of the small cafés, and was stopped by a policeman who asked where he was going. Gérard produced passports and papers, establishing his identity and the officer advised him to go home. All these happenings were interpreted by the poor deluded Nerval as signs that she, Jenny Colon, was waiting for him. He entered the rue de la Vieille Lanterne.

It was with profound shock that Paris heard the next morning that Gérard had been found in the early hours, hanged to a railing by a white cloth, the girdle of Mme. de Maintenon. It is probable that with some dreadful cloud upon his brain, he destroyed himself. Yet his very gentleness had made such an end unexpected, for he seemed to be under the protection of a child's guardian angel. Some sudden impulse brought him a death alien to the character of his whole life. "Il est mort," said Paul de Saint-Victor, "de la nostalgie du monde invisible. Paix à cet homme en peine de l'idéal." He was buried January 30th from Notre-Dame, as the Church did not refuse its prayers to a poor soul who had exchanged the dream of life for the dream of death, as Gautier so exquisitely put it; (2) and was laid to rest in the Père Lachaise Cemetery not far from Balzac.

(1) Théophile Gautier, "Notice"

(2) Théophile Gautier, "Portraits et Souvenirs Littéraires"
p. 71

PART II

It is not necessary to exaggerate the importance of the half dozen volumes which make up the work of Gérard de Nerval. He was not a great writer; he had moments of greatness, and it is the particular quality of these moments which is of interest to us. There is the entertaining "Voyage en Orient;" there is the very fine translation of "Faust" and the admirable versions of Heine; there are the volumes of short stories and the sketches, of which even "Les Illuminés," in spite of the promise of its title, is little more than a charming compilation.

But there remain three compositions, the "Sonnets," "Le Rêve et la Vie," and "Sylvie," of which "Sylvie" is the most objective, a wandering idyll full of pastoral scenes, and containing some folk songs of the Valois, two of which have been translated by Rosetti. "Le Rêve et la Vie" is the most intensely personal, being a narrative of madness, unique as madness itself. The "Sonnets" may be considered as having created something at least of the method of the later Symbolists. These three compositions, in which alone Gérard is his finest self, all belong to the periods when he was, in the eyes of the world, actually mad. The "Sonnets" belong to two of these periods, "Le Rêve et la Vie" to the last, and

"Sylvie" was written in the short interval between the two attacks in early 1853. Thus we have the case of a writer graceful and elegant when he is sane, and only passionate when he is insane.

Symons traces to Gérard de Nerval the particular origin of the literary movement which he calls Symbolist. In his "Sonnets" he is vague and obscure, resulting from his state of mind, described in "Le Rêve et la Vie:" "I then saw, vague, drifting into form, plastic images of antiquity, which outlined themselves, became definite and seemed to represent symbols, the meaning of which I seized only with great difficulty." (1)

Nothing could more precisely represent the impression made by these sonnets, in which, as Symons says, for the first time in French words are used as the ingredients of an invocation; as themselves not merely color and sound but symbol. (2) Here are words which create an atmosphere by the actual suggestive quality of their syllables as according to the theory of Mallarmé, they should do. Persuaded as Gérard was of the sensitive unity of all nature, he was able to trace all resemblances where others saw only variations, and the setting together of unfamiliar and apparently alien

(1) Gérard de Nerval, "Le Rêve et la Vie"

(2) Symons, "The Symbolist Movement," p. 34

things which comes so strangely upon us in his verse, was perhaps an actual sight of what it is our misfortune not to see. Madness in him had let up the hidden links of distant and divergent things; perhaps in the same manner as that in which a new sight of things is gained by the artificial stimulation of hashish or opium. No one before Gérard realized that such things as these might be the basis of almost a new poetic school. He himself probably did not realize all that he had done. It was Mallarmé who theorized upon what Gérard had divined and so got all the glory. So, as Symons states, we owe to the fortunate accident of madness one of the foundations of what may be called the practical aesthetics of Symbolism. (1)

In Arémis for example, you see not only the method of Mallarmé, but the manner of Verlaine.

"La Treizième revient. . C'est encor la première;
Et c'est toujours la seule, - ou c'est le seul moment:
Car es-tu reine, ô toi! la première ou dernière?
Es-tu roi, toi le seul ou le dernier amant?

"Aimez qui vous aimai du berceau dans la bière;
Celle que j'aimai seul m'aime encor tendrement;
C'est la mort - ou la morte. Ô délice! ô tourment!
La Rose qu'elle tient, c'est la "Rose trémie."

"Sainte napolitaine aux mains pleines de feux,
Rose au coeur violet, fleur de sainte Gudule:
As-tu trouvé ta croix dans le désert des cieux?
Roses blanches, tombez! vous insultez nos dieux:
Tombez, fantômes blancs, de votre ciel qui brûle:
La Sainte de l'abîme est plus sainte à mes yeux!"

(1) Arthur Symons, "The Symbolist Movement," p. 35

So, in a single sonnet, we may almost claim to see a foreshadowing of the two styles in one. Gérard de Nerval had then divined that poetry should be beauty itself. Vision had taught him symbol.

As a poet Gérard was very independent at a time when almost every poet was undergoing the influence of Hugo. He was one of the first to seek nuance, which Verlaine is to extol later in his famous lines of the *Art Poétique*.

Car nous voulons la Nuance encor,
Pas la couleur, rien que la nuance.
Oh! la nuance seule fiance
Le rêve au rêve et la flûte au cor!

In his sonnets, which are perhaps his most original poetic compositions, he repeatedly turns to Italy. Some of them are very clear, but others are quite incomprehensible. We have foreign words, dashes and signs as in musical language, which correspond to pauses and sighs. Gérard is for rhythm, rhyme is not absolutely necessary. Like the novels of Stendhal these sonnets are precursors of a new school and it is only recently that Gérard de Nerval has been given due credit.

The prose writer is the real Gérard, and he owes nothing to the "frère mystique," his second Moi, except in the case of "Aurélia." In style he is French in race and sentiment, but in his matter he is extremely Germanic. He is the most imaginative and mystic of all the writers of the

Romantic School. He never seems to have outlived the influence of Goethe and Hoffmann and Heine. "I have learned style," said Gérard, "writing letters of tenderness and friendship, and when I reread those that have been saved, I find strongly traced there the impression of my readings, especially of Diderot, Rousseau and Sénancour." (1)

Gérard liked to understand nature as Jean-Jacques did in "les Confessions" and "*Rêveries d'un promeneur solitaire.*" The same adventurous spirit and flitting about at random, not worried about shelter, singing old songs while strolling along, enjoying all that surrounded him, full of ecstasy over trifles - a falling leaf, a young girl passing by, the song of a lark. And these delightful qualities never left him in the course of his wandering life. Whether he goes to Germany, to Flanders or to the Orient, adapting himself to the different customs to the extent of wearing the native costume, he still retains his French originality. He gives us the effect by a succession of minute details. It is in this freedom and insouciance that he is distinguished from the writers of the eighteenth century, especially Rousseau and Diderot from whom he stems.

He does not limit himself to stating that he

(1) Gauthier Ferrières, "Gérard de Nerval, La vie et l'œuvre," p. 334

passed through a certain city. Rousseau does not tell us in a single word about Venice, for example, a city in which he lived. Gérard knows how to see and be interested in everything for he has all the qualities of an accomplished traveler, and on this point no one in his age surpasses him. Art, archeology, history, interest him intensely. For example, in his "Isis," he writes about a trip to Pompeii and to the Greek Archipelago; he gives us a lifelike impression of the country through which he is traveling, thanks to his love for popular customs. He knows all the inhabitants; no detail, however trivial or risqué, stops him. He goes everywhere, to the inns, to palaces and to museums. If he is looking at a river, he mentions the woman washing her clothes; an ancient ruin seems more beautiful to him if a peasant is smoking his pipe. The most pleasing details are side by side with the facts that are most evident. As Gautier says, "Il est inutile de se déranger pour voir la Caire, puisque Gérard de Nerval y est allé." Ferrières says that we never get weary of reading Nerval's descriptions, as we do reading about other travels because life is there, swarming with noises and colors, with its trivialities, its beauty as well as its ugliness. (1)

Then, too, Gérard who had studied and who knew

(1) Gauthier Ferrières, "Gérard de Nerval, La Vie et l'œuvre," p. 337

thoroughly all religions, initiates us without difficulty into all the popular beliefs. Under his pen forgotten myths come to life and with an open mind, he shows how they attach themselves to other religions. As he has no prejudices, he tries to make us forget ours. As Ferrières remarks "Turkish society, after reading Nerval, no longer has its farouche aspect, and the customs concerning women and polygamy, for example, are no longer what we had believed them to be." (1) He thinks that this talent of Gérard's has not been sufficiently stressed. Even in his descriptions of filthy quarters, of the squalor and ugliness, he never loses a bit of his elegance, and he brings into these pictures such good faith that we cannot find them unwholesome.

Gérard takes us also into Paris and its suburbs that he loved so well. "Sylvie," one of his best prose works, makes live a name that will long be remembered. Gautier thought of "Paul et Virginie," of "Daphnis et Cloé," when reading it. He compared it to "un marbre grec légèrement teinte de pastel aux joues et aux lèvres par un caprice du sculpteur." (2)

There is a great deal of the autobiographical in all of Gérard's work. Even when madness darkened his thought,

(1) Gauthier Ferrières, "Gérard de Nerval, La Vie et l'oeuvre," p. 337

(2) Théophile Gautier, "Histoire du Romantisme," p. 142

he is still gay and happy. In "les Illumines," he tells about his other self, analyzing people who are really only pretexts behind which he can more easily lay bare his own personality. One would never suspect he was mad. He uses such graceful language in telling of all these eccentricities! And during a respite he wrote "Aurélia." Gautier defined this kind of analysis "La Raison écrivant les mémoires de la Folie sous sa dictée." (1) It is indeed his second self who conceived and dictated it, but it is still the real Gérard, the reasonable Gérard who holds the pen and writes about the visions which trouble or delight him. And the reader accompanies him on the walk when madness invades him, without missing a single phase or thread. It has no special order, it is almost a diary into which all the occult sciences enter and in which the victim observes himself and makes notes of his own illness. He did not finish this work; the last pages of it were found in his pocket when he was taken from la rue de la Vieille-Lanterne.

Ferrières says that doubtless Gérard's work will never be known to a wide public, men of letters, sensitive souls, the elite, know his work and those who can feel with Calderón that perhaps life is, after all, only a dream, will

(1) Théophile Gautier, "Portraits et Souvenirs Littéraires," p. 65

the other side of the world. I have had
a good deal of time to think about it, and
I have come to the conclusion that the
best way to do it is to go to the United States
and get a job there. I have been offered
a position at a company in New York City
that makes electronic equipment. They
are looking for someone with my
background and experience. I am
very interested in this opportunity.
I have been offered a job in Canada
but I don't think it's the right place for
me. I am not interested in moving to
Canada. I am interested in moving to
the United States. I am interested in
moving to the United States because
I want to live in a country where
there is more freedom. I want to live
in a country where I can express
myself freely. I want to live in a
country where I can work hard
and succeed. I want to live in a
country where I can make a
difference in the world. I want to
live in a country where I can
make a difference in the world.

read him. (1)

It is Gérard's obsession for the mysterious, the other-worldliness, that led him to write drama. He wrote many plays, short scenes, which he either destroyed, never finished or distributed among his friends. Between 1826 and 1835 he wrote ten plays and "Han d'Islande," a dramatization of Hugo's novel, is the only one that has come down to us in its entirety. This play was not presented because its scenery was too complicated. After this rebuke, he tried a new type with "Villon l'Ecolier." This was a legendary play and was not produced either. Then he wrote "Nicholas Flamel," a play of three scenes in verse which was not finished. This was inspired by "Faust" and resembles it in that Satan appears this time in the Tour-Saint-Jacques. As a matter of fact, in all his dramatic work he never completely shook off the influence of Goethe's "Faust." He wrote "Le Prince des Sots," a "diablerie" in two acts in verse. It was unsuccessfully presented in 1830 at the Théâtre-Français. The following year at the Odeón it was given and received great acclaim. However, it needed a prologue to conform to the rules and regulations of the Odeón and Gérard asked Théo to supply it, which he did, but the director of the Odeón still refused it,

(1) Gauthier Ferrières, "Gérard de Nerval, La Vie et l'oeuvre," p. 342

and first time, and will continue to do so for a long time to come. I have had many opportunities to study the life of the people in the United States, and have been greatly interested in the progress of the country. The most interesting part of my work has been the study of the people and their customs. I have been able to learn a great deal about the people of the United States, and have been greatly interested in the progress of the country. The most interesting part of my work has been the study of the people and their customs. I have been able to learn a great deal about the people of the United States, and have been greatly interested in the progress of the country.

giving as an excuse that five acts were necessary. Gérard did not attempt anything further with this work.

But the Middle Ages alone did not interest him. He conceived "Tartuffe chez Molière," a comedy in three acts, which was read and accepted at the Odeón but not played. He had also planned his famous "Reine de Saba," the music for which Meyerbeer was to write.

He collaborated a great deal with Alexandre Dumas and they took turns signing their works. While he was having the affair with Jenny Colon, they wrote "Piquillo," and Gérard was sure he would make a fortune from it, as well as win the love and favor of the star. Unhappily, this play was not a success. "L'Alchimiste" given at the Renaissance on April 10, 1839 bore the signature of Dumas. It was a very free adaptation of the German play entitled "Fasio." The first two acts reveal the poetry of Gérard but later the hand of the dramatist Dumas enters, and the setting becomes very elaborate and the words heavy. It had a moderate success.

In 1839 "Léo Burckart" was presented at the Porte-Saint-Martin. This was the work of the two collaborators but was signed by Nerval, and reveals his influence rather than Dumas'. It is a political play and you hear Gérard speak through the mouth of the main character. Through this play

and the first time I have seen it. It is a very large tree, and the trunk is about 10 feet in diameter. The bark is smooth and greyish-white, with some lichen growing on it. The leaves are large and green, with serrated edges. The flowers are small and yellow, and the fruit is a large, round, red berry. The tree is located in a clearing in the forest, and there are other trees and bushes around it. The ground is covered in fallen leaves and pine needles. The sky is clear and blue, and the sun is shining brightly. The overall impression is one of a healthy, well-established tree in its natural habitat.

he meant to teach France to know Germany. This play likewise met with bad luck, and for the second time he saw disappear the chances of making a fortune.

In 1840 he wrote the "Second Faust." He had already translated the part about Helen which Goethe had published separately in 1827. In Goethe's work Gérard sees the theory of spiritual survival of beings, of their possible return through the waves of eternity, essentially identical and recognizable under the form of what had been their earthly form.

Since his youth Gérard had thought about a Faust, a Faust of the German legends and of the novel by Klinger by which Goethe himself was inspired to write his "Second Faust." He even had talked to Dumas about the possibility of composing a Faust in the French style, not exactly imitating Goethe, but using legends not previously used.

"L'Imagerie de Harlem ou la Découverte de l'Imprimerie," a legend in five acts and ten tableaux, was presented for the first time at the Porte-Saint-Martin in 1851. It was successful for a short time and again Nerval thought he had a fortune within reach, and again he was doomed to disappointment.

Gérard founded "le Monde Dramatique" a paper whose

purpose was to make Jenny Colon known and popular. This business venture was not successful, and even after it had passed into the hands of new owners, Gérard's influence was still seen in the articles. He wrote for *La Presse*, but he had the great faculty of losing the articles he had written, and had to be egged on to get them in on time. The editor, finding him roaming around the streets, his daily column not done, would take him to a room, make him sit down and force him to do the work. This of course was unpleasant to Nerval, as he hated to work under pressure. In his criticisms he is always reasonable, and shows himself to be not romantic in his preference and admiration.

Ferrières says that Gérard de Nerval was a victim of Romanticism, that he was never a Romantic at heart. By studying Goethe, Bürger and Uhland, he could see how closely German poetry was allied to popular legends and to the songs of the Valois.⁽¹⁾

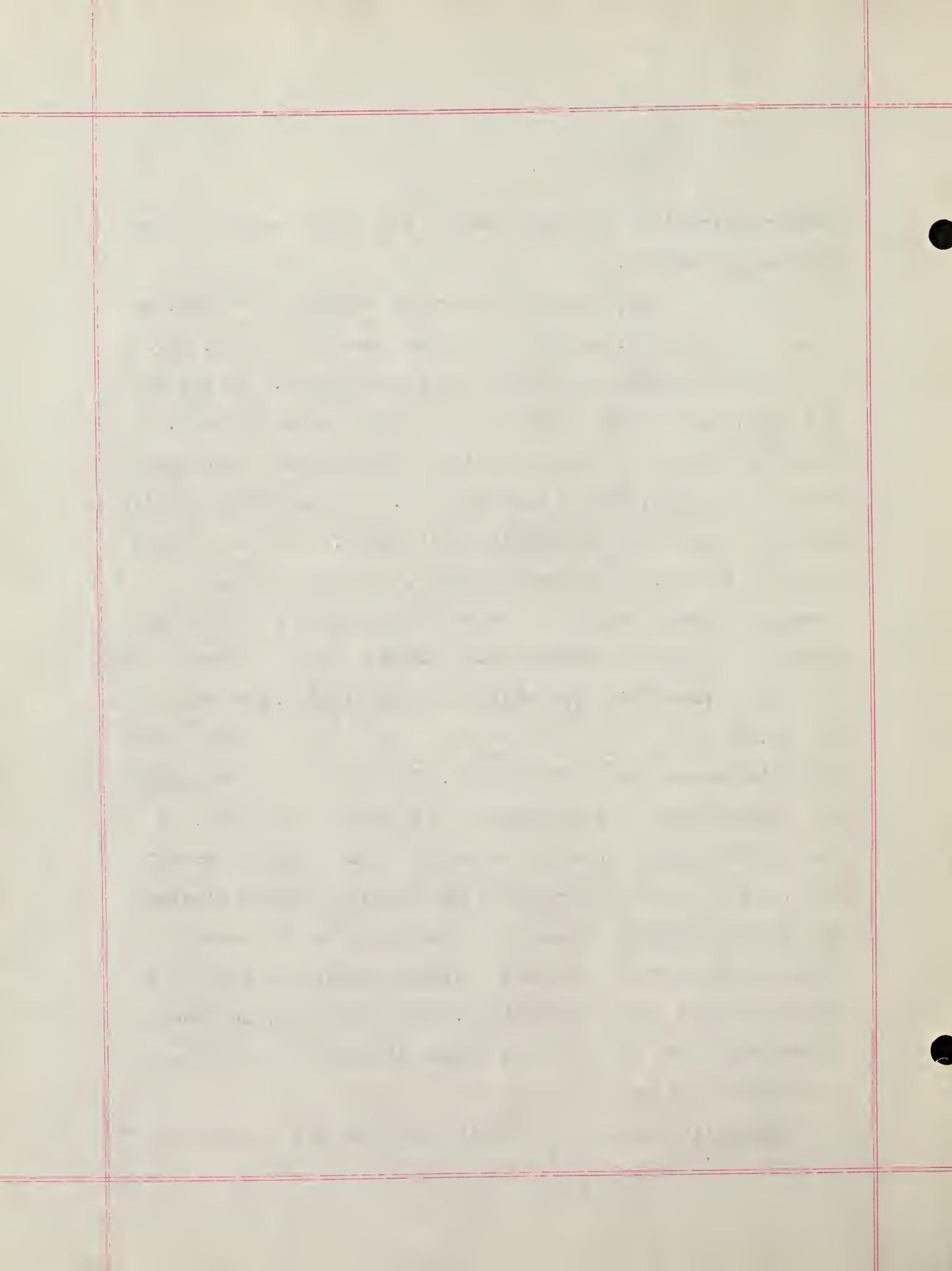
Gautier in his "Portraits et Souvenirs Littéraires" says that Gérard was a Romantic in the depth and newness of his ideas, in a certain Germanic quality acquired from his familiarity with Goethe and the other German poets whom he read in their original tongue, but in form he belonged to the

(1) Gauthier Ferrières, "Gérard de Nerval, La Vie et l'oeuvre," p. 317

conservative style that was dear to the French school of the eighteenth century. (1)

We see, then, in Gérard de Nerval a Romantic, an incurable Romantic, who had less pose than even Vigny, for Vigny after all had a certain pose of martyrdom. He was an original, an eccentric, it is true, but he never shammed. He was as simple as a bird hopping about here and then suddenly flying off, no one knew whither. He was really a child who never grew up in a materialistic world. His world was a world of nature, of the supernatural, a world of dreams. Where does genius begin and madness end? That is one of the questions which we probably never shall be able to answer and Gérard de Nerval will probably remain an enigma. He was not a genius, to be sure, but he is one of the most important minor poets in modern French literature. Whether or not we agree with Symons that he inaugurated a new school of poetry, we must admit that he pointed the way to a new note, a musical note, a note devoid of rhetoric and fustian, and he widened the scope of French literature by bringing to it German imagination, mystery, fantasy - elements which were not commonly found in French literature. Rousseau, Mme. de Staël, Gérard de Nerval all enriched French literature with a new fresh note from beyond the Rhine.

(1) Théophile Gautier, "Portraits et Souvenirs Littéraires," p. 10



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(Gérard Labrunie, dit)

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